

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1.- 26. (Cancelled)

27. (New) A system comprising:

a first sub-conference node;

a second sub-conference node;

a storage device comprising a party information table;

a mixing controller; and

a mixer, to select at least a first portion of conference information and a second portion of conference information received from the first sub-conference node and the second sub-conference node based on the party information table and the mixing controller, and to transmit the first portion of information to the first sub-conference node at a first time slot and to transmit the second portion of information to the second sub-conference node at a second time slot.

28. (New) The system of claim 27, further comprising:

a voice activity detector to determine if the first sub-conference node or the second sub-conference node is speaking;

wherein the results of the voice activity detector are received at the mixing controller, and wherein the mixing controller transfers the results to the mixer.

29. (New) The system of claim 28, wherein the first portion of information is selected by a processor based on audio activity sensed by the voice activity detector.

30. (New) The system of claim 27, wherein the first portion of information is to be selected by a processor based on an attribute received from the first sub-conference node.

31. (New) The system of claim 30, wherein the first portion of information is to be modified by the processor and the second portion of information is to be unmodified based on a change in the attribute received from the first sub-conference node.

32. (New) The system of claim 27, further comprising:
a third sub-conference node,
wherein the third sub-conference node is coupled to a single processor during a conference and the single processor selects at least a portion of information received from the three sub-conference nodes, and transmits that selected portion of information to the three sub-conference nodes.

33. (New) A mixer, comprising:
an input to receive information from at least two sub-conference nodes;
an output to transmit information to the at least two sub-conference nodes;
a storage device to contain attributes of each sub-conference node; and
a processor to select at least a first portion of conference information and a second portion of conference information received from the at least two sub-conference nodes based on the attributes of each sub-conference node and a mixing controller, and to transmit the first portion of information to a first of at least two sub-conference nodes at a first time slot and to transmit the second portion of information to a second of at least two sub-conference nodes at a second time slot.

34. (New) The mixer of claim 33, further comprising a voice activity detector coupled to the at least two sub-conference nodes and the input to provide conference information from at least one of the sub-conference nodes to the mixer if audio activity is detected at the at least two sub-conference nodes.

35. (New) The mixer of claim 34, wherein conference information is not provided at the output for at least one of the sub-conference nodes when audio activity is not detected by the voice activity detector from that sub-conference node.
36. (New) The mixer of claim 33, wherein the attributes are stored in a party information table.
37. (New) The mixer of claim 33, wherein the storage device is random access memory.
38. (New) The mixer of claim 33, wherein the storage device is a magnetic disk.
39. (New) The mixer of claim 33, further comprising a second processor to communicate with the storage device to vary attributes contained in the storage device.
40. (New) A method, comprising:
 mixing data streams for at least a first sub-conference and a second sub-conference participating in a conference in a single mixer; and
 transmitting a first portion of the data streams to the first sub-conference and a second portion of the data streams to the second sub-conference.
41. (New) The method of claim 40 further comprising:
 changing the data streams mixed by the mixer while the conference is in progress, wherein changing the data streams includes adding a data stream for an additional sub-conference or modifying first sub-conference based on an attribute without modifying the second sub-conference while the conference is in progress.
42. (New) The method of claim 40, wherein modifying the first sub-conference includes modifying the audio volume at the first sub-conference without modifying the audio volume of the second sub-conference.

43. (New) The method of claim 40, wherein the data stream for the first sub-conference and the data stream for the second sub-conference are processed sequentially by the mixer.
44. (New) The stream mixing method of claim 40, wherein information as to how the streams for the first and second sub-conferences are to be mixed is stored in a data storage device.
45. (New) The method of claim 40, wherein the data storage device is random access memory.
46. (New) An apparatus, comprising:
a processor;
a medium having stored instructions which, when executed by a processor perform a method, the function method:
mixing data streams for at least a first sub-conference and a second sub-conference participating in a conference in a single mixer; and
transmitting a first portion of the data streams to the first sub-conference and a second portion of the data streams to the second sub-conference.
47. (New) The method of claim 46, the instructions further comprising:
changing the data streams mixed by the mixer while the conference is in progress, wherein changing the data streams includes adding a data stream for an additional sub-conference or modifying based on an attribute first sub-conference without modifying the second sub-conference while the conference is in progress.
48. (New) The method of claim 46, wherein the data stream for the first sub-conference and the data stream for the second sub-conference are processed sequentially by the mixer.
49. (New) The stream mixing method of claim 46, wherein information as to how the streams for the first and second sub-conferences are to be mixed is stored in a data storage device.